

§ 105-163.2. Employers must withhold taxes.

(a) **Withholding Required.** – An employer shall deduct and withhold from the wages of each employee the State income taxes payable by the employee on the wages. For each payroll period, the employer shall withhold from the employee's wages an amount that would approximate the employee's income tax liability under Article 4 of this Chapter if the employer withheld the same amount from the employee's wages for each similar payroll period in a calendar year. In calculating an employee's anticipated income tax liability, the employer shall allow for the additions that employee is required to make under Article 4 of this Chapter and the deductions, and credits to which the employee is entitled under Article 4 of this Chapter. The amount of State income taxes withheld by an employer is held in trust for the Secretary.

(b) **(Effective for taxable years beginning before January 1, 2016)** **Withholding Tables.** – The manner of withholding and the amount to be withheld shall be determined in accordance with tables and rules adopted by the Secretary. The withholding allowances provided by these tables and rules shall, as nearly as possible, approximate the additions the employee is required to make under Article 4 of this Chapter and the deductions, and credits to which an employee is entitled under Article 4 of this Chapter. The Secretary shall promulgate tables for computing amounts to be withheld with respect to different rates of wages for different payroll periods applicable to the various combinations of allowances to which an employee may be entitled and taking into account the appropriate standard deduction. The tables may provide for the same amount to be withheld within reasonable salary brackets or ranges so designed as to result in the withholding during a year of approximately the amount of an employee's indicated income tax liability for that year. The withholding of wages pursuant to and in accordance with these tables shall be deemed as a matter of law to constitute compliance with the provisions of subsection (a) of this section, notwithstanding any other provisions of this Article.

(b) **(Effective for taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2016)** **Withholding Tables.** – The manner of withholding and the amount to be withheld shall be determined in accordance with tables and rules adopted by the Secretary. The withholding of wages pursuant to and in accordance with these tables shall be deemed as a matter of law to constitute compliance with the provisions of subsection (a) of this section, notwithstanding any other provisions of this Article. The Secretary shall promulgate tables for computing amounts to be withheld with respect to different rates of wages for different payroll periods applicable to the various combinations of allowances to which an employee may be entitled and taking into account the appropriate standard deduction. The tables may provide for the same amount to be withheld within reasonable salary brackets or ranges so designed as to result in the withholding during a year of approximately the amount of an employee's indicated income tax liability for that year.

The withholding allowances provided by these tables and rules shall, as nearly as possible, approximate the amount of the employee's indicated income tax liability for that year based upon all of the following factors:

- (1) An income tax rate equal to the rate set in G.S. 105-153.7 plus one-tenth of one percent (0.1%).
- (2) The additions the employee is required to make under Article 4 of this Chapter.
- (3) The deductions and credits to which an employee is entitled under Article 4 of this Chapter.

(c) **Withholding if No Payroll Period.** – If wages are paid with respect to a period that is not a payroll period, the amount to be deducted and withheld shall be that applicable in the case of a miscellaneous payroll period containing a number of days, excluding Sundays and holidays, equal to the number of days in the period with respect to which such wages are paid. In any case in which wages are paid by an employer without regard to any payroll period or other period, the amount to be deducted and withheld shall be that applicable in the case of a miscellaneous payroll

period containing a number of days equal to the number of days, excluding Sundays and holidays, which have elapsed since the date of the last payment of such wages by such employer during the calendar year, or the date of commencement of employment with such employer during such year, or January 1 of such year, whichever is the later.

(d) **Estimated Withholding.** – The Secretary may, by rule, authorize employers to estimate the wages to be paid to an employee during a calendar quarter, calculate the amount to be withheld for each period based on the estimated wages, and, upon payment of wages to the employee, adjust the withholding so that the amount actually withheld is the amount that would be required to be withheld if the employee's payroll period were quarterly.

(e) **(Effective for taxable years beginning before January 1, 2016)** Alternatives to Tables. – If the Secretary determines that use of the withholding tables would be impractical, would impose an unreasonable burden on an employer, or would produce substantially incorrect results, the Secretary may authorize or require an employer to use some other method of determining the amounts to be withheld under this Article. The alternative method authorized by the Secretary must reasonably approximate the predicted income tax liability of the affected employees. In addition, with the agreement of the employer and employee, the Secretary may authorize an employer to use an alternative method that results in withholding of a greater amount than otherwise required under this section.

The Secretary's authorization of an alternative method is discretionary and may be cancelled at any time without advance notice if the Secretary finds that the method is being abused or is not resulting in the withholding of an amount reasonably approximating the predicted income tax liability of the affected employees. The Secretary shall give an employer written notice of any cancellation and the findings upon which the cancellation is based. The cancellation becomes effective upon the employer's receipt of this notice or on the third day after the notice was mailed to the employer, whichever occurs first. If the employer requests a hearing on the cancellation within 30 days after the cancellation, the Secretary shall grant a hearing. After a hearing, the Secretary's findings are conclusive.

(e) **(Effective for taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2016)** Alternatives to Tables. – If the Secretary determines that use of the withholding tables would be impractical, would impose an unreasonable burden on an employer, or would produce substantially incorrect results, the Secretary may authorize or require an employer to use some other method of determining the amounts to be withheld under this Article. The alternative method authorized by the Secretary must reasonably approximate the predicted income tax liability of the affected employees based upon the factors provided in subsection (b) of this section. In addition, with the agreement of the employer and employee, the Secretary may authorize an employer to use an alternative method that results in withholding of a greater amount than otherwise required under this section.

The Secretary's authorization of an alternative method is discretionary and may be cancelled at any time without advance notice if the Secretary finds that the method is being abused or is not resulting in the withholding of an amount reasonably approximating the predicted income tax liability of the affected employees. The Secretary shall give an employer written notice of any cancellation and the findings upon which the cancellation is based. The cancellation becomes effective upon the employer's receipt of this notice or on the third day after the notice was mailed to the employer, whichever occurs first. If the employer requests a hearing on the cancellation within 30 days after the cancellation, the Secretary shall grant a hearing. After a hearing, the Secretary's findings are conclusive. (1959, c. 1259, s. 1; 1973, c. 476, s. 193; 1981, c. 13; 1989, c. 728, s. 1.41; 1989 (Reg. Sess., 1990), c. 945, s. 7; 1997-109, s. 2; 2014-3, s. 14.5(a); 2015-241, s. 32.16A(a).)